

For further information please contact:

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Complaints / PALS Information

Whether you want to complain, enquire or simply talk to someone about your concerns, we are here to help and support you.

North Somerset Community Partnership Patient Advice & Liaison Service (PALS) Office can be contacted at:

Patient Advice & Liaison Service (PALS)
North Somerset Community Partnership
Castlewood POX Box 237
Tickenham Road
Clevedon
North Somerset
BS21 9AX

Freephone: 0800 389 5260

Email: nscp.pals@nsomersetcp-cic.nhs.uk

If you require this leaflet in large print, braille, audio format or in another language please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service. (PALS) Please contact us on the freephone number or email address above. We are pleased to offer a telephone interpreting service. For further details on how to access this service, please contact PALS using the details above.

Patient information leaflets are available for all services provided by North Somerset Community Partnership. Please ask your health care professional. North Somerset Community Partnership is committed to Equality and Diversity for both staff and those who use our services.



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Taking Care of your Feet

A guide to Athletes Foot & Fungal Toenails

Department of Podiatric Medicine



What is Athletes Foot?

This is a fungal infection of the skin, footwear creates the necessary conditions of moisture and warmth between the toes, and communal activity permits the spread of infection. Swimming baths and communal changing rooms are the most frequent source of infection.

What are the symptoms of Athletes Foot?

Itching between the toes.

- Red, raw looking skin, which is often itchy
- Skin that flakes, peels or cracks
- A sore, pus-filled, weeping rash
- Small spot like blisters on one or both feet appearing like a rash
- Dry, red and scaly skin on the soles of feet

Skin gets damp when:

1. It has not been properly dried after washing
2. Footwear is worn that does not allow the passage of air through e.g. synthetic materials
3. Tight footwear holds the toes together, preventing air getting in between the toes
4. There is excessive sweating
5. Footwear is worn far too long



How can I prevent Athletes Foot?

- Wash your feet daily with soap and tepid water
- Dry feet thoroughly/gently between toes
- Choose hosiery made from predominantly natural fibres, preferably cotton or wool
- Wear well fitting shoes or sandals where ever possible which allow the air to circulate
- Change socks or stockings every day
- Choose shoes made of material such as leather, this will let your skin breath. Changes shoes regularly to allow them to dry out between use
- Paint surgical spirit in between your toes with a cotton bud and allow it to evaporate dry

Preventing the spread of fungal infection

1. Never wear shoes or slippers belonging to others, or allow others to wear yours
2. Use your own towel
3. Wear 'flip flops' (or similar) when changing in communal changing places
4. Thoroughly rinse the bath or shower after use

Treatment

Skin

There are many creams and powders on the market. Consult your local Pharmacist/Podiatrist for advice on the most suitable product.

Nails

Toenail infections are most difficult to clear totally because the nails are often thickened. Your Podiatrist will thin the nail down as this enables the treatment to reach the affected area in the most effective way.

Alternative treatment may be made available to you by your GP, if they consider it necessary.

Fungal Toenails

Toenails may also be infected, with the nail becoming thickened, brittle and yellowish brown in colour.



Fungal infection of the toenail (distal subungual onychomycosis)